

Wildflower Walk

The Wildflower Walk is a picturesque 2,820 metre circuit through bush land renowned for its stunning wildflower displays.

This easy to follow trail starts and finishes on Lovers Lane opposite the caravan park and takes between 40 and 70 minutes to complete.

Waypoint 1 – *Prostanthera magnifica* and *Calytrix* sp.

*Prostanthera
magnifica* is one of
about 90 species
known as the 'mint
bushes' because of

the aromatic foliage of many species. Indeed it is related to a number of herbs including mint, thyme, oregano and sage.

The calytrix genus consists of about 70 species which include many fringe-myrtles and starflowers. The species found here however has no widely accepted common name.

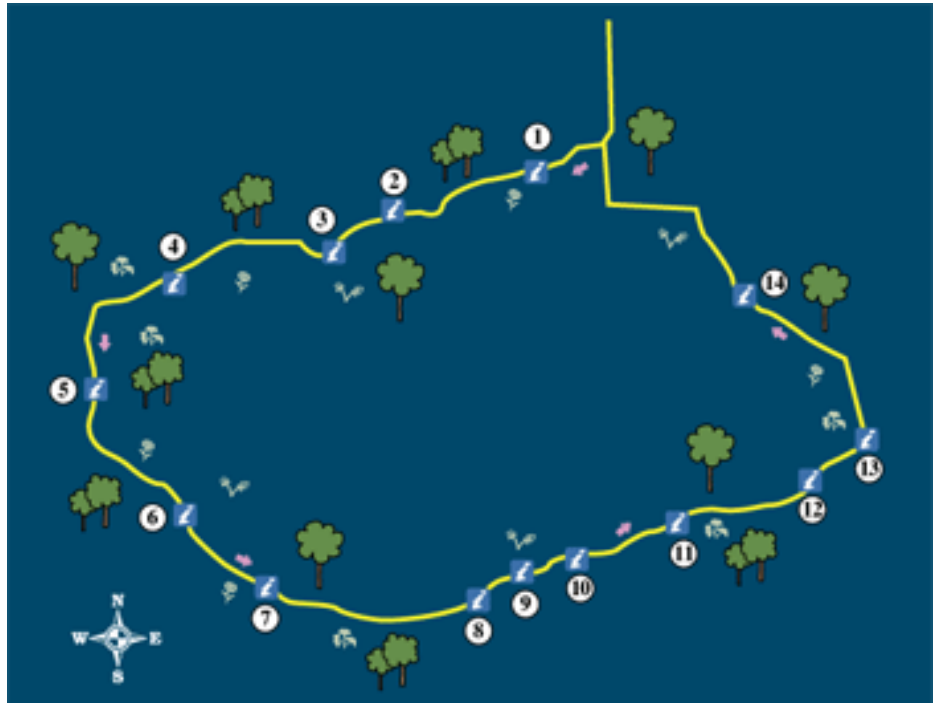
Waypoint 2 – Water harvesting

A reliable water supply is critical to survival in the dry inland of Australia and for the first 70 years of its history Mullewa struggled with either too little or too much. Given that dry times far outnumbered the floods much work was put into trying to 'drought-proof' the town.

Waypoint 3 – *Pterostylis macrocalymma* and *Caladenia* sp.

When wildflower season is in full swing it is easy to be drawn into the big picture of things – the carpets of flowers and dazzling colours but if you look closely you may see the spoon-lipped rufous greenhood, a delicate orchid tucked beneath the limbs of the acacia.

If you wander off the trail you may happen upon one of WA's most handsome wildflowers, the spider orchid. During September and



October creamy white flowers trail their elegant filamentous petals which can be up to 10cm from head to toe!

Waypoint 4 – *Cephalopterum drummondii*.

One of the daisy family this species is commonly known as the pompom head and appears from July to October as long as good rain has fallen in May or June at least 25mm.

Waypoint 5 – *Acacia tetragonophylla* and *Acacia aneura*

Many of the trees growing along the Wildflower Walk are known as *Acacia tetragonophylla* or locally as Gurarra. The species produces tasty and nutritious seeds but is commonly known across Australia as 'Dead Finish'. Why?

Do you think you would know a mulga if you saw one? Local Wajarri people call it Yalurr but there are precious few along the trail. Nonetheless mulga is perhaps the most widespread of all inland tree species.

Waypoint 6 – *Schoenia cassiniana*

The pink everlasting is said to be the signature species of wildflower season in the Midwest and Murchison regions. After winter rains it grows massive carpets along road verges, across open flats and throughout the mulga scrub.

Waypoint 7 – *Brachyscome iberidifolia* and *Podolepis canescens*

Another species from the everlastings family, locally it is known as 'native daisy' and across Australia as the Swan River daisy.

Typical of the everlasting family this species only appears after winter rain. The flowers are generally yellow though sometimes they can range towards a golden orange.

Waypoint 8 – *Borya sphaerocephala*

Commonly known as 'pincushions' the small spiky looking plant appears from August to October. In a good season the white flowers can look like a fine coating of snow against the bright green foliage.

Waypoint 9 – *Trachymene ornata* and Almost a Mining Town

One look at the 'fruits' on this plant will quickly explain its common name sponge-fruit. They are round white puffballs about the size of a marble and form in clusters creating a definite sponge-like appearance.

A find of gold from a sample of stone near Mullewa was reported in the Geraldton Express in 1896. At the time hundreds of prospectors were passing through Mullewa on their way to the goldfields around Cue, Mt Magnet and Meekatharra and no doubt would have taken the time to explore this country on their way through. Sadly it all came to nothing; prospectors moved on and diggings eventually collapsed and grew over but Mullewa found other ways to prosper.

Waypoint 10 – *Ptilotus obovatus*

Cotton bush grows across a wide swath of inland Australia. With a mass of white or pink globular flower heads up to 2cm in diameter it is easy to see why the bush could be mistaken for a shower of cotton balls.

Waypoint 11 – *Solanum lasiophyllum* and *Ricinocarpos velutinus*

Despite its name, flannel bush is not a particularly friendly specimen to encounter at close quarters. Its branches are covered with short stiff spines up to 1cm in length.

This shrub can grow up to 2m in height with clusters of small pale yellow flowers on the ends of short stems. Wajarri people call it Nyirdangu and use it to make windbreaks around their camps.

Waypoint 12 – *Senna glutinosa*

This shrub has bright lemon-yellow flowers. Long flattened pods develop from the flowers and when dry these rattle in the wind leading to the common name rattlepods.

Waypoint 13 – *Keraudrenia hermanniifolia*

This plant is generally known as the crinkle-leafed firebush. Prior to opening the buds are shaped somewhat like a gooseberry with soft purple paper-thin ridges. Some have likened them to a tiny Chinese lantern.

Waypoint 14 – *Waitzia nitida*

The flowers of this annual herb are notable for their chunky egg-yolk coloured centre surrounded by a thicket of multi-layered petals.